

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 15-29 are pending in the present application. None of the claims were amended in this response. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 15-22 and 25-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Carlton et al.* (US Pub. 2004/0203363). Claims 23-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Carlton et al.* (US Pub. 2004/0203363) in view of Holmes et al. (US Patent 6,134,432). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

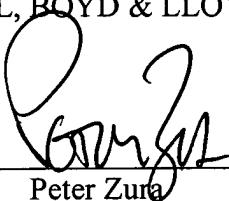
Applicant notes that the US filing dates for the *Carlton* references is April 19, 2002. The present application claims benefit from PCT Application PCT/DE03/01235, filed on April 4, 2003 which claims foreign priority from German Application 10218808.4, filed on April 19, 2002. These priority documents are referenced in form PTO/SB/103 and also referenced in the PCT application. Since Carlton was not filed before the present application (see MPEP 2136.03), the *Carlton* reference is not available as prior art. Accordingly, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103 are improper and should be withdrawn.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are traversed and should be withdrawn. As such, claims 15-29 of the present application are patentable over the art of record. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket no. (0112740-1005) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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